

M Multiple Job Mountings

Part One: Tiered Panel Mats

by Chris A. Paschke, CPF

The beauty of working on a multiple piece job is that the entire project is a series of repetitions, or exact duplications, of a single design. Once the boards are sized, moulding lengths cut, and all general preparation has been completed, all that's needed is a system to expedite the project as efficiently as possible.



Working "En Mass"

Any time a series of items needs to be mounted, framed and fitted to an identical design, the key to successful time usage is completing each individual step on all of the units prior to moving on to the next step. This two part article will take you through mounting, sizing, cutting, assembly and finishing of thirteen identically framed certificates.

By using a formulated system, this particular project was completed by one framer over the course of a three day span, including everything from frame construction to fitting.

Defining/Designing And Analyzing The Project

This multiple project features a Fletcher-Terry certificate awarded to participants of their dealer training course held at the Farmington, Connecticut headquarters. The tiered panel mat design with gold accent strips and spacer will showcase both the certificate itself and accuracy of the mat cutting equipment used to

produce it, in this case the Fletcher 2100.

A liner mat of Bainbridge Black-core #9025 Shipbottom reinforces a tiered panel mat design using Bainbridge #9009 Melba, surface tiered with one sheet of Crescent Colored Art Paper #P989 Raven Black, topped by one sheet of Niddeggen German mouldmade single sheet paper. The frame's moulding is Larson-Juhl #385 SW, it is glazed with TruVue Conservation glass, and all certificates are dry mounted to a 4-ply substrate prior to hinging to the mat unit.

A Panel Mat By Any Other Name

The style of this mat design goes by number of different names, including Three-Dimensional Double Bevel, Moat Mat, Wide V-Groove or simply a Panel Mat. I'll refer to it as a panel mat—with a surface tiered top mat.

Remember, a "tiered mat" refers to the bonding or mounting together of papers and/or 4-ply mat boards to create tiny hairlines and stripes within the bevel (see "Surface Tying", PFM July 1993), not the way in which a particular mat is cut.

Mounting The Surface Tiered Top Mat

All matting materials and papers to be used for the surface tiering are pre-sized in preparation for mounting together in the press. Photo 1 shows stacks of pure film adhesive (Fusion 4000), and Raven Black and Niddeggen art paper ready to be assembled

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into their respective mounting packages.

Note the fanned assembly, lower right, where the base mat blank is layered from bottom to top with adhesive, black paper, adhesive, and surface Niddeggen (diagram 1). The stacked units to the left are ready to be individually placed into the 200°F press for their required three minutes for bonding. Since a mechanical press is to be used for mounting, all of the materials are pre-dried prior to stacking, as designated by proper TTPM mounting guidelines.

A System To The Mounting

As soon as the first tiered unit is stacked to mount, place it within a release paper envelope and into the press. During the three minutes it takes to mount, continue assembling additional units. As each timer rings off, rotate the mounted envelope under a glass weight, place a new envelope into the press for mounting, and continue assembly. As the completed tiered units are removed from the cooling envelope, they can now be trimmed of excess adhesive and ragged paper to prepare them for sizing on a mat or wall cutter.

The concept is simple: time efficiency. Never stand idle while you can be shifting items into or out of a press, under glass or trimming for sizing. Once mounted, trimmed and sized, all mat blanks are ready for cutting.

Stops Save Time

Using stops allows this type of mat to be cut with no pencil markings, and without the need for retaping the fallout back into the mat opening. It's a simple formula, making this a design that should be in any frame designer's repertoire. It's quick, impressive and profitable, plus there are numerous design options, such as the addition of spacers or accent strips (to be covered in part two).

All dimensions in this article reflect a non-weighted mat design in order to simplify the formula and ex-

Diagram 1

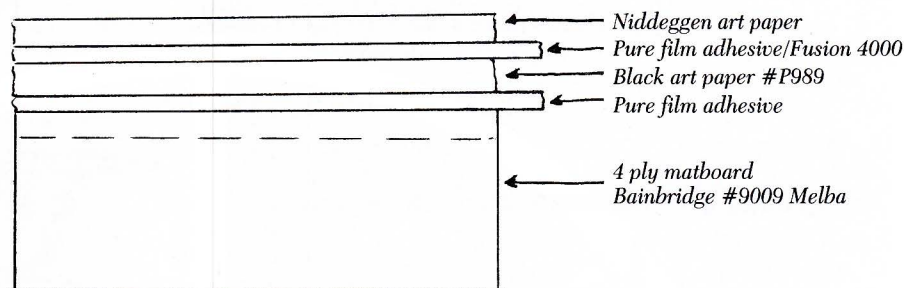


Diagram 2

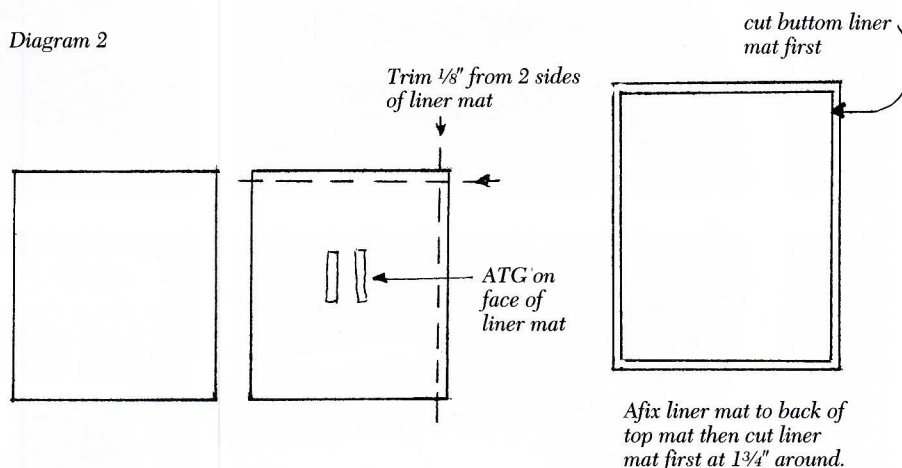
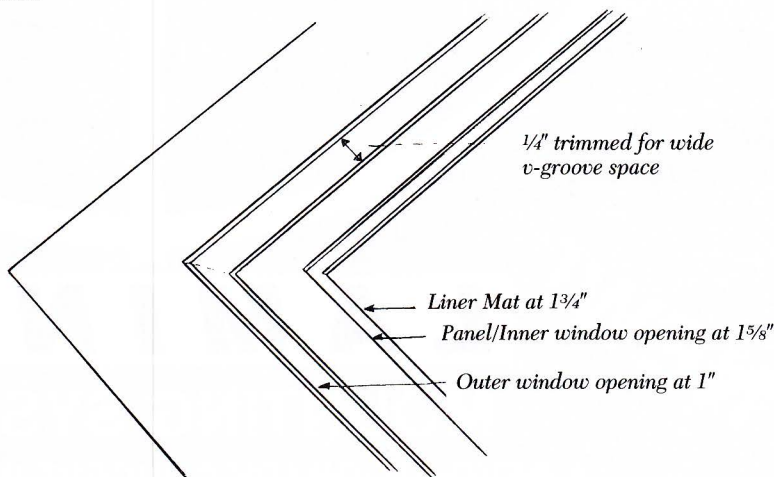


Diagram 3



ecution, but there is a weighted bottom in the featured project. You may either add to the mat dimensions and trim off three sides to weight the bottom, or allow for the differences as the mats are formulated, cutting all 13 sets of three sides first, then all 13 sets of the wider weighted border.

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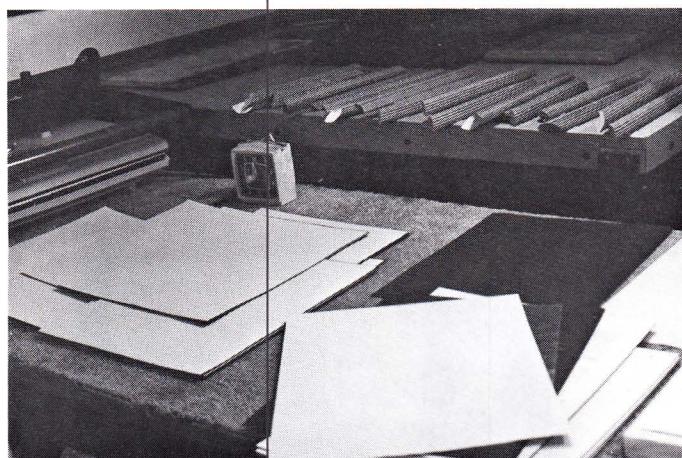


Photo 1

The lower right corner shows stacked Crescent Colored Art Paper, Niddeggen and Bainbridge #9009 board blanks ready to be stacked with adhesive for mounting. Stacked units on the left are dried and waiting to be put into the press. All mouldings have been chopped and are ready to build also.

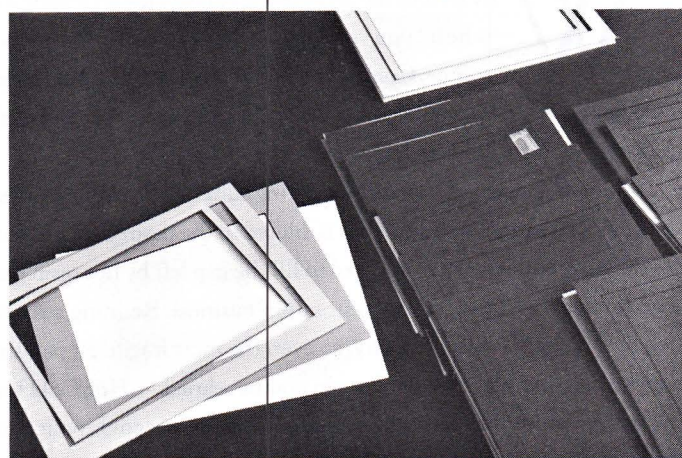


Photo 2

Keep all parts of each mat unit together during the process.

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All sets are cut and set aside in their units for ensuing steps.

Sort the $\frac{1}{8}$ " sized foam (to be used for the outer border spacer), liner mat and top mat into units; as each cutting step is completed, keep all parts of each mat set together (photo 2). Size the liner mat down $\frac{1}{8}$ " on two sides and stick it to the back of the top mat using two small 3" strips of ATG tape placed in the center of the face of the liner mat blank (diagram 2).

Cut the liner mat *first* with all stops (top, bottom and mat guide) set at $1\frac{3}{4}$ ". Remove the completed liner mat and set aside. Now remove the inner fallout (stuck to the top mat) and discard. To accommodate for a

$\frac{1}{8}$ " liner, reset the bottom stop and mat guide to $1\frac{5}{8}$ ".

If the top stop were set at the same $1\frac{5}{8}$ ", the fallout would cut free and need to be taped back in place for the next cut. If you set the top stop to $1\frac{11}{16}$ " ($\frac{1}{16}$ " rather than $\frac{1}{8}$ " smaller) the fallout will remain held in place by the $\frac{1}{16}$ " undercut at the top. For the final opening, all stops are set at 1".

Photo 3 shows the top tiered mat blank with the inner fallout remaining, held in place while the outer opening is cut free. This fallout is gently removed as a unit, turned face up, and the outer $\frac{1}{4}$ " of the panel is

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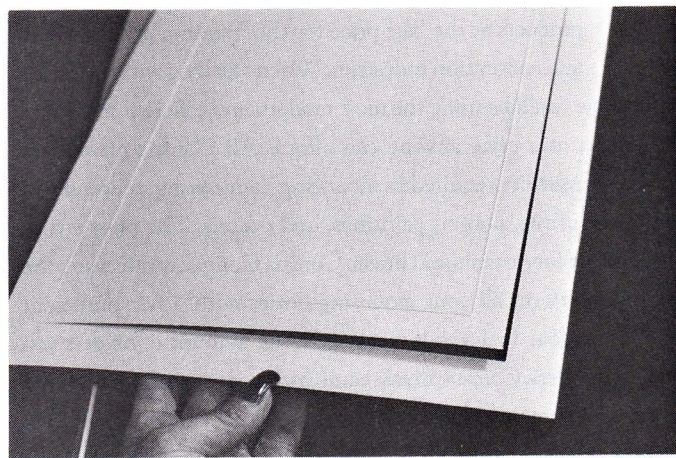


Photo 3

The inner border width top mat opening is undercut at $1\frac{11}{16}$ ", rather than $1\frac{5}{8}$ ", around to hold the inner fallout in place without tape. The outer border of 1" around is allowed to cleanly fall out with the inner fallout still intact.

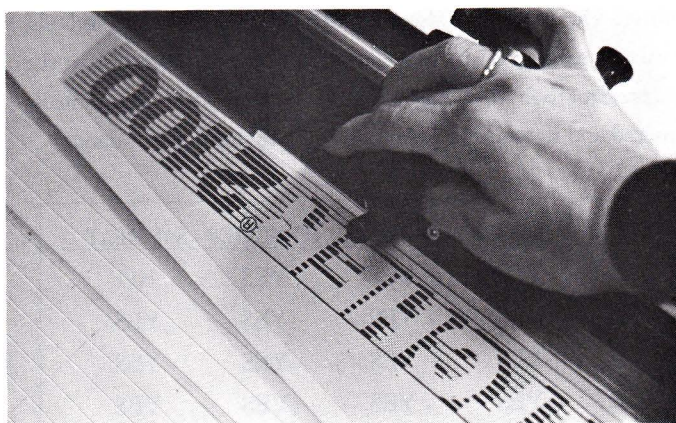


Photo 4

Gently remove the fallout/panel combination, turn it face up, and trim $\frac{1}{4}$ " off on all four sides using the bevel side of your mat cutter head (ie: like a v-groove).

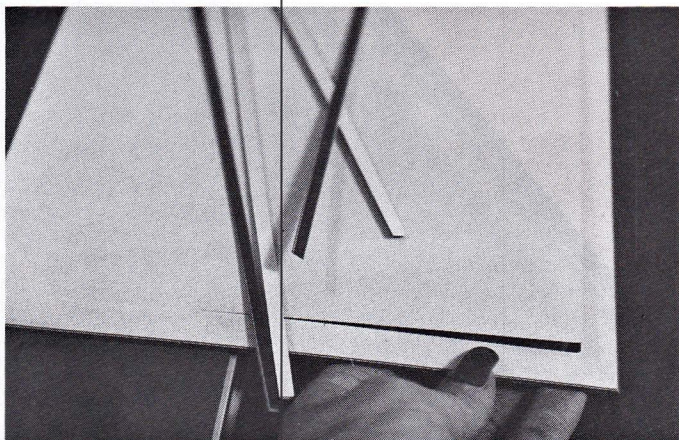


Photo 5

Once trimmed, the inner fallout may now be popped free with a sharp blade. Square up the remaining paper tufts left in the corners.

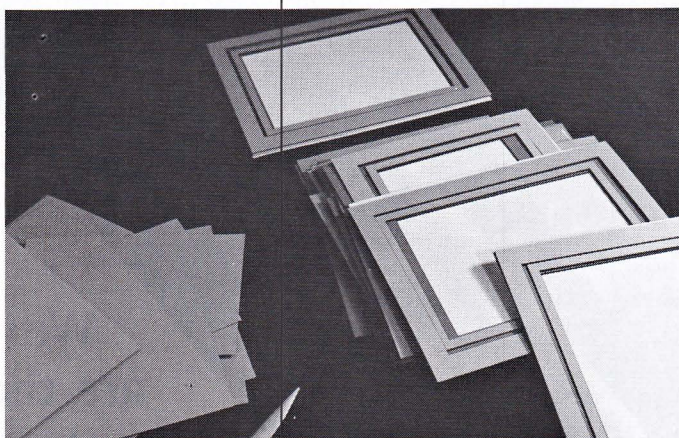


Photo 6

Keep all sets together as each step is completed. The stacked units on the right are complete with sized $\frac{1}{8}$ " foam for spacer and backing board. The pile to the left is the remaining fallouts which may now be sized down to fit other photo jobs, etc. They are surface tiered mats, after all.

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trimmed off all four sides (photo 4).

The inner fallout may now carefully be cut free (photo 5) from the panel using a sharp blade. Clean any remaining paper tufts and check the corners for bevel plane alignment and perfection, making any additional corrections. The fine hairlines of a tiered mat will attract additional attention to messy corners, hooks, overcuts and non-burnished mat openings.

Be sure to keep all sets together as you work (photo 6) and never intermix individual pieces after mat cutting. Once all mat sets are cut as liner, panel and top mat, the $\frac{1}{8}$ " foam

spacers may be cut and attached to the back of the outer top mat border (photo 7).

The Formula

There isn't a literal formula we're following for this design: it's more of a system. The concept of cutting a panel mat by using stops allows us to establish comfortable mat border widths using proven, successful, pre-specified widths for the inner panel, the wide v-groove and the outer border in relation to the inner visible liner. The featured project uses a combination of $1\frac{3}{4}$ " liner, $1\frac{5}{8}$ " inner

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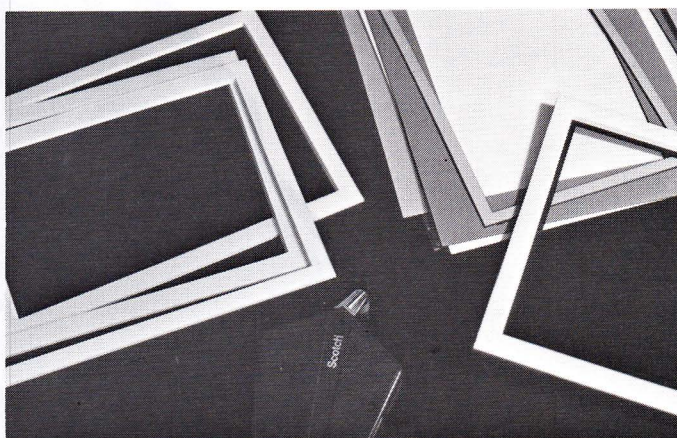


Photo 7

The $\frac{1}{8}$ " foam spacers are bevel cut at a $\frac{3}{4}$ " border to be ATG taped as reverse bevels behind the outer mat border piece.



Photo 8

Mount everything during the same session, whether it's a surface tiered mat or the certificate to be framed. Permission for use of this project courtesy of Fletcher-Terry Co.

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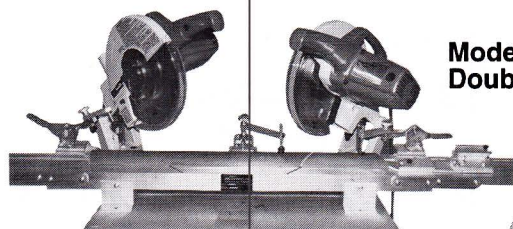
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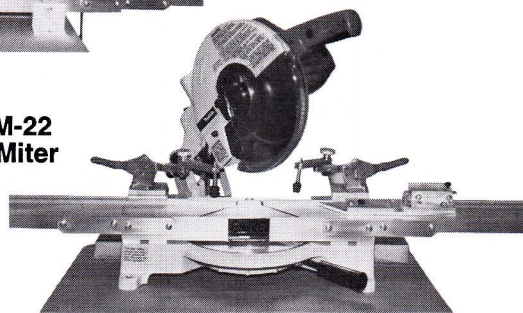
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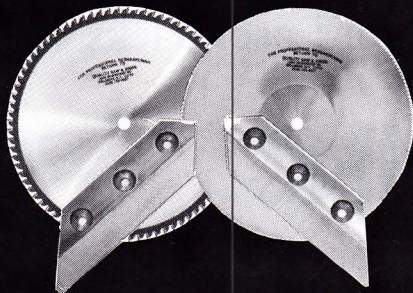
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mastering mounting

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border, 1" outer border top mat, with 1/4" trim for a standard 11" x 14" certificate frame design (diagram 3).

A larger common border format of 2 1/8" liner with a 2" inner border, 1 1/4" outer border and 1/4" trim is also a very successful combination. Although the border widths vary, the 1/4" trim off the fallout remains constant in either design. A narrower trim makes the space a little too tight for an accent strip while 1/2" would be much too wide. A space of 1/4" to 3/8" establishes a good opening width for a panel mat with a spaced outer border.

From A Design Point Of View

Use your well-adjusted sense of balance and proportion when selecting the dimensions for border widths in designing a panel mat. Don't repeat exact (or visually similar) widths, such as the outer border width equaling that of the moulding, or the v-groove width being the same as the panel itself. Also, keep the inner panel towards the inner third of the mat width as a good standard guideline.

Why A Production Tiered Mat?

The idea is to work "en mass". The more of one design you are able to execute in one sitting, the greater the profits. If you target production jobs, consider the routine and flow of the project. If mounting is an integral portion of the design, as with this job, it is always most effective to mount everything during the same session, whether it's a tiered mat or the actual certificates being framed (photo 8). Remember that a tiered mat will bring in a higher ticket price than any simple double mat . . . so why not use that press to its full mounting potential? 

Chris A. Paschke, CPF, owns Designs Ink, Oxford, Connecticut, featuring commercial and custom framing, product consultation and design. She specializes in mounting, matting and design creativity and works with numerous industry leaders including Bienfang, Crescent Cardboard, Dahle, Fletcher-Terry, Larson-Juhl, PFM, PPFA, and Seal Products.